

WASHINGTON EARNINGS COMPARED TO THE U.S. AND OTHER WESTERN STATES: A REPORT BASED ON THE CENSUS

Research Brief No. 33E
March 2005

Washington's Full Time Total Earnings by Sex Compared to the U.S. and Other Western States

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Using data from the 2000 five percent Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS), total earnings for full time workers were examined for Washington State residents aged 18 to 64 by sex and then compared to U.S. residents as a whole as well as other western states.¹

- In 1999, Washington State's mean and median earnings for full time workers exceeded the U.S. values (see Table 1).
- In Washington, women's mean earnings were 69 percent of men's earnings, which is two percentage points higher than the U.S. as a whole.
- Women's median full time earnings in Washington were 73 percent of men's median full time earnings, one percentage point lower than the U.S. as a whole.
- Women's earnings were closer to men's earnings at the bottom of the earning distribution than at the top. The large gaps between men's and women's earnings at the top of the earnings distribution explain why women's full time earnings were a higher percentage of men's full time earnings at the median rather than at the mean.²

Table 1: 1999 Mean and Median Full Time Earnings By Sex: Washington State vs. United States

	Men	Women	Men- Women	Women's Full Time Earnings as a Percentage of Men's Full Time Earnings
Mean				
Washington	\$50,056	\$34,418	\$15,638	69%
United States	\$48,615	\$32,761	\$15,854	67%
Median				
Washington	\$40,000	\$29,000	\$11,000	73%
United States	\$36,000	\$26,700	\$9,300	74%

Total Earnings by Sex for Full Time Workers: Washington State vs. Western States

Comparing the mean and median full time earnings by sex of other western states to those of Washington State one finds:

- California had the highest mean full time earnings for both men and women and the highest median full time earnings for women in 1999 (see Table 2). Washington had the highest median full time earnings for men and the second highest median earnings for

The Washington State data used in this analysis come from the 2000 five percent Public Use Microdata Sample, (PUMS). More information on these surveys can be found at the Census website:

<http://www.census.gov/main/www/pums.html>.

women. Washington had the second highest full time mean earnings for both men and women.

- Women's full time earnings as a percentage of men's full time earnings were highest in California. Looking at mean full time earnings, women in California earned 72 percent of what men earned. On average, women that worked full time in Washington earned 69 percent of what men that worked full time earned.
- Among full time workers in California, women at the median earned 77 percent of what men at the median earned. In comparison, women at the median in Washington earned 73 percent of what men at the median earned.

Table 1: 1999 Mean and Median Full Time Earnings By Sex: Washington State vs. Other Western States

	Men	Women	Men-Women	Women's Full Time Earnings as a Percentage of Men's Full Time Earnings
Mean				
Washington	\$50,056	\$34,418	\$15,638	69%
California	\$53,215	\$38,142	\$15,073	72%
Oregon	\$45,415	\$31,346	\$14,069	69%
Idaho	\$40,693	\$26,583	\$14,110	65%
Median				
Washington	\$40,000	\$29,000	\$11,000	73%
California	\$38,800	\$30,000	\$8,800	77%
Oregon	\$35,100	\$26,000	\$9,100	74%
Idaho	\$32,000	\$22,500	\$9,500	70%

1. Full time work is defined as working 35 or more hours a week, 45 or more weeks a year, and having non-zero earnings. Part time work is defined by non-zero earnings, and working less than 35 hours a week or less than 45 weeks a year. No earnings is simply defined as having zero earnings.
2. For more details on why mean earnings were greater than the median earnings see: [Research Brief 26A: Total Earnings for All Adults Aged 18 to 64 in 1999.](#)

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